

In the claims

1. (Currently Amended) A system for providing recorded announcements on a communications network comprising:

at least one central terminal for routing communications on the communication network and in communication with the network; and

an announcement service node coupled to the central terminal further comprising a data schema and an application server for accessing the data schema,

wherein the application server is accessible by one or more central terminals coupled to the communications network ~~and~~,

wherein said data schema comprises a storage mass for storing a plurality of recorded announcements that include information for callers on the communications network, and

wherein a call from an individual is connected to the at least one central terminal, with the at least one central terminal receiving an appropriate recorded announcement from the announcement service node so as to audibly convey information to the calling individual as the recorded announcement is played from the at least one central terminal during the call.

2. (Original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said storage mass comprises a relational database.

3. (Original) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said stored recording announcements are in the form of Lightweight Directory Access Protocol.

4. (Original) A system according to claim 1, further comprising an SS7 network, wherein at least one central terminal initiates queries to said announcement service node via the SS7 network.

5. (Original) A system according to claim 4, wherein said central terminal comprises a central office of a telephone service network.

6. (Original) A system according to claim 5, wherein said central office initiates queries to said announcement service node in X.25 protocol.

7. (Original) A system according to claim 1, comprising a plurality of central offices of a telephone service provider coupled to the service node of the telephone service provider.

8. (Currently Amended) An application server for accessing a database at a service node in a communications network comprising:

a plurality of central offices connected to the network;

means for accessing the database connected to said network for storing recorded announcements in response to queries from one or more of said plurality of central offices, wherein the recorded announcements include information for users who place calls on the communications network;

means for storing and dynamically maintaining the recorded announcements stored in the database; and

means for providing recorded announcements to at least one central office on the network upon a call from an individual being connected to the central office such that the recorded announcement audibly conveys information to the calling individual as the recorded announcement is played from the central office during the call.

9. (Original) A server according to claim 8, wherein said database comprises a relational database.

10. (Original) A server according to claim 8, wherein said database is in the form of Lightweight Directory Access Protocol.

11. (Original) A server according to claim 9, wherein said relational database is dynamically updateable by an external administrator.

12. (Original) A server according to claim 8, wherein said means for storing recorded

announcements is updateable by an external administrator.

13. (Original) A server according to claim 8, comprising means for retrieving a caller's file based on a query from a central office of a telephone communication network.

14. (Currently Amended) A system for routing files of recorded announcements on a communications network, the system comprising:

a switch circuit coupled to the communications network;

at least one recorded announcement file coupled to the switch circuit via a trunk network, the at least one recorded announcement file including information for users who place calls on the communications network;

a service node for storing recorded announcements, said service node coupled to the switch circuit and accessible by a plurality of switch networks on the communications network;

a plurality of applications coupled to the service node for sending queries to the service node; and

routing means for providing recorded announcements to one or more users of the communications network in response to the queries from the applications, wherein the recorded announcements audibly convey information to the one or more users as the recorded announcement is played from the switch and through the routing means during the call.

15. (Original) A system according to claim 14, comprising:

at least one database containing a plurality of files related to users of said network, wherein the at least one database is coupled to the service node.

16. (Original) A system according to claim 14, wherein said communications network is an Intranet system.

17. (Original) A system according to claim 14, wherein said communications network is an Internet system.

18. (Original) A system according to claim 14, where said service node comprises means for translating protocol for recorded messages for a switch on the communications network.

19. (Original) A system according to claim 14, comprising means for matching a user's communication with a trigger on the communications network.

20. (Original) A system according to claim 19, comprising means for identifying a user's recorded announcement file based at least in part on the matched user's communication.

21. (Currently Amended) A centralized recorded announcement system for providing recorded announcements to devices on a telephone service provider network, the system comprising:

means for triggering a request for a recorded announcement, the recorded announcement including information for users who place calls on the telephone service provider network;

means for identifying a requested recorded announcement;

means for sending a recorded announcement request to a database;

means for updating said database based on current recorded announcements of said system; ~~and~~

means for sending an identified recorded announcement from said database to a device of the telephone service provider network; and

means for audibly conveying information to a user who has placed a call on the telephone service provider network by playing the message from the device of the telephone service for the user during the call.

22. (Original) A centralized recorded announcement system according to claim 21, comprising means for identifying a user of said service provider upon triggering a request for a recorded announcement.

23. (Original) A centralized recorded announcement system according to claim 22, comprising means for retrieving a recorded announcement file from said database for at least one identified user.

24. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium storing a plurality of instructions adapted to be executed by a processor for providing recorded announcement files to one or more central offices of a communications network, the plurality of instructions comprising instructions to:

receive and translate a request from a trigger for a recorded announcement stored in a database, the recorded announcement including information for customers who place calls on the communications network;

generate an instruction, the instruction based at least in part on the request for a recorded announcement stored in the database;

send the instruction to an application programming interface, the instruction corresponding to one or more requests from the trigger for recorded announcements;

retrieve one or more recorded announcement files from a data base; ~~and~~

~~send~~ play a recorded announcement file of the one or more recorded announcement files from a central office to a customer data device using a telephone to thereby audibly convey information to the customer during a call, wherein the played recorded announcement file is based on the request for the recorded announcements.

25. (Currently Amended) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network for a telephone service provider comprising the steps of:

coupling a request for a recorded announcement from a device on the network of the telephone service provider to a centralized announcement service node, the recorded announcement including information for users who place calls on the network;

providing at least one recorded announcement to a device on the service provider's network in response to the coupled request; ~~and~~

retrieving, in response to a request for an announcement from a device, at least one recorded announcement file from a centralized storage mass coupled to the centralized announcement service node and the network of said telephone service

provider; and

playing the retrieved at least one recorded announcement file from the network to a user who has placed a call to the network to thereby audibly convey information to the user during the call.

26. (Original) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 25, comprising the steps of:

identifying a user of said network based on a communication from the user's device on the network; and

retrieving at least one recorded announcement for the user based in part on the identification of said user.

27. (Original) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 26, comprising the step of:

identifying the user based on Dialed Number Identification Service (DNIS).

28. (Original) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 26, comprising the step of:

identifying the user based on a code dialed by said user.

29. (Original) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 26, comprising the step of:

identifying the user based on Automatic Number Identification (ANI).

30. (Original) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 26, comprising the step of:

coupling a plurality of queries for recorded announcements to said centralized announcement service node via an SS7 network.

31. (Original) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 26, comprising the steps of:

adding a recorded announcement to said centralized storage mass; and
providing a translation to a switch on the network correlating to the added
recorded announcement.

32. (Original) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 26, comprising the steps of:

prioritizing a plurality of queries for recorded announcements from one or more
central offices on the network; and

providing a plurality of recorded announcements to said one or more central
offices on the network.

33. (Currently Amended) A method for providing recorded announcements to users of a telecommunications system, the method comprising:

a step for triggering a request for a recorded announcement by initiating a call on
said system, the recorded announcement including information for users who place calls
on the telecommunications system;

a step for generating a query for a recorded announcement, the query based at
least in part on the recorded announcement request triggered from said user;

a step for sending the query to one or more data storage schemas via a network,
the query corresponding to one or more recorded announcement triggers initiated by the
call; and

a step for sending at least one recorded announcement to a user of the system in
response to the query, wherein sending the at least one recorded announcement to the
user includes audibly conveying information to the user as the recorded announcement is
played from the telecommunications system during the call.